

STATINTL

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Drug Peddlers Ignore Nixon Threat

By Jack Anderson

At a recent narcotics conference, President Nixon declared dramatically that keeping narcotics out of the country is "just as important as keeping armed enemy forces from landing in the U.S." The President then announced sternly that he would cut off aid to countries whose leaders "protect the activities of those who contribute to our drug problem."

Predictably, these bold words drew election-year headlines for the President and warm approval from a public alarmed over the drug danger. Yet classified documents in our possession show that the President has refused to cut off aid, despite evidence that certain foreign leaders are protecting the drug smugglers.

The smuggling operations in Laos, for example, illustrate the difference between what Mr. Nixon says in public and what his intelligence documents show in secret. To prop up the Souvanna Phouma government, he has poured in more than \$200 million in military aid annually. Yet his reports from the CIA and other agencies give him every reason to cut off this aid.

Says one document: "A broad spectrum of Lao society is involved in the narcotics business, including generals, princes, high-level bureaucrats and province governors."

The CIA specifically advised that Laotian generals are providing the transportation for

drug smugglers. Incredible as it sounds, the planes and trucks used to carry the U.S.-bound narcotics are provided by the U.S. military programs which Mr. Nixon has sworn to cut off.

The secret documents make clear that the President is putting his military policies in Asia ahead of the drug invasion. "The difficulties of undertaking such drastic action (as aid cutoffs) cannot be over-emphasized," declares another document on Laos, "since . . . the risk of jeopardizing some part of the military effort is high."

In Cambodia, President Nixon also continues to bolster an unstable dictatorship with \$240 million worth of U.S. aid a year. Yet Cambodia is an important transshipment point for dope. An intelligence document explains why Mr. Nixon, however, has no intention in Cambodia of carrying out his threat to cut off aid:

"If U.S. aid were withdrawn, the government's ability to withstand Communist aggression would be weakened to the point of collapse."

Saigon Smugglers

In South Vietnam, as well, the documents attest to "the corruption among government civilian, military and police officials, some of whom have been actively participating in the narcotics traffic themselves . . ." But again there is no real thought of cutting off aid.

The secret documents bluntly give the reason: "It is

not in U.S. interests to implement an aid cutoff, even to punish Vietnam for failure to control drugs . . ."

President Nixon's double talk on drugs is nowhere more apparent than in Thailand which gets over \$100 million in U.S. aid a year.

"We believe that major punitive measures (such as) withdrawal of aid, denial of Most Favored Nation status, etc. . . . would probably undermine our cooperative relations with Thailand and jeopardize ongoing security activities . . ."

The President's threats could also be carried out in Iran, which the CIA fears may soon become a major supplier for U.S. drug traffickers. But the CIA reports:

"The Shah has spoken out on a few occasions . . . against addiction (and) rumors persist that some members of the royal family and parliament are narcotics users. Swiss authorities recently charged an Iranian Prince who accompanied the Shah to Switzerland with having transferred pure opium to Geneva."

Throughout Latin America, the same look-the-other-way policy prevails.

President Nixon, for instance, praised Paraguay for extraditing a notorious French narcotics smuggler, Auguste Ricord, to face trial in the U.S. What Mr. Nixon neglected to mention was that Ricord was relinquished only after we wrote a series of columns about Paraguay's government-

backed drug smuggling and after Democratic congressmen began talking of cutting off aid to Paraguay themselves.

If the President really wants to do something about Paraguay, he has CIA reports that two Paraguayan generals and the chief of its secret police are abetting the drug traffic. However, insiders say there is no real move to end the \$12-million-a-year aid to Paraguay.

In Panama, which gets \$18 million annually in aid, the President has intelligence reports saying: "One of the more glaring examples of official corruption in the country of Panama . . . General Omar Torrijos and President Lakas appear to be controlling factors in the narcotics traffic."

All over Latin America, the intelligence documents say, "the greatest detriment to effective enforcement is corruption. The corruption goes all the way to the top of some Latin American governments."

But in Latin America, too, President Nixon's vows to cut off aid to offending lands have been ignored. The documents say explicitly: "Coercive measures, such as reduction or termination of AID programs . . . generally have proven to be ineffective."

Footnote: The stack of documents in our hands also tells similar tales of rampant drug activity with various kinds of government collusion or inaction in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Mexico, Lebanon, India, Peru, Bolivia, Hong Kong and Syria.

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U.S. Fears Increased Flow Of Heroin From New Sources

By Stanley Karnow
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American narcotics specialists are privately expressing concern at the prospect of an increase in the illegal flow of heroin into the United States from South and West Asia as the supply of drugs from other foreign sources dwindles.

Confidential studies prepared by the Central Intelligence Agency and other U.S. government bureaus warn that the halt in Turkish opium cultivation may spur international drug traders to tap fresh sources of narcotics in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran.

Turkey's legal opium production is scheduled to end this year as a result of U.S. subsidies aimed at encouraging Turkish farmers to grow other crops. Most heroin reaching the United States is refined in France from opium of Turkish origin.

The CIA studies, made available to The Washington Post by columnist Jack Anderson, estimate that about half of the total world raw opium supply of 2,500 tons is produced in India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Iranian output has jumped to 156 tons in 1971 from eight tons in 1969, when Iran legalized opium production.

Until now, little of the opium grown in South and West Asia has served as the raw material for heroin smuggled into the United States. But according to the CIA "the withdrawal of Turkey from the illicit world market" threatens to attract narcotics merchants seeking new sources of supply.

The U.S. government studies calculate that India produces about 200 tons of illegal opium per year. Most of this opium enters a domestic black market serving some 300,000 Indian addicts. So far, the studies say, India has not been a significant narcotics source.

The studies caution, however, that India could become a supplier of the U.S. market unless the New Delhi government acts to suppress its internal narcotics trade. Or as one of the reports puts it:

"India is frequently cited in United Nations bodies as a model for controlled opium production and distribution. From the U.S. standpoint, this myth has been detrimental even though India is not a source of U.S. heroin supply.

"Because the myth absolves New Delhi from dealing seriously with its own addiction and traffic, it has been able to strike a pose of moral superiority internationally. This blocks U.S.-Indian cooperation on narcotics matters and diverts India from a potentially useful role in developing effective multilateral pro-

grams in the United Nations, which is a focal point of U.S. policy strategy."

The U.S. report urges that actions be undertaken by the Nixon administration to "expose the existence of India's illicit markets," adding that "the United States might lose some good will in the process of exposure but not on a scale to offset the likely gains."

Turning to Pakistan and Afghanistan, the CIA studies assert that "laxities in law enforcement" in those countries "appear to offer a trafficker easier access to tribal producers" of opium than in other parts of the world.

According to another classified U.S. government report, Pakistan produces about 175 to 200 tons of illicit opium per year, most of it cultivated in the country's northwest tribal regions.

The report blames the Pakistan government's failures to suppress the drug trade on inefficiency and "official corruption." It also points out that the Pakistan authorities are unwilling to tackle the drug problem because they fear "a hostile response from the tribal areas."

Recalling that "a number of diplomatic representations" made by the United States to the Pakistan government have had no "apparent effect," the report recommends that the Nixon administration apply "pressures and inducements" including a halt in U.S. aid to persuade the Pakistanis to deal with their drug output.

According to the U.S. studies, Afghanistan produces between 100 and 125 tons of opium a year, cultivated mainly by Pushtun tribesmen in the eastern parts of the country. Most of Afghanistan's narcotics output, a study states, is exported illegally. "Smuggling is a way of life in Afghanistan," it says.

The study further warns that drug networks operating out of Afghanistan are ripe to be taken over by international traffickers because the Afghan authorities take a benign attitude toward narcotics traders.

The U.S. study attributes the continuation of the Afghan narcotics trade to "official corruption" as well as to a lack of interest on the part of the country's authorities.

The report warns against vigorous U.S. actions that might increase Afghan dependence on the Soviet Union. It further concludes: "It is unrealistic to expect Afghanistan, which suffers little from the narcotics problem itself, to give its solution the highest priority in view of the extremely limited human and financial resources of the country."

A CIA memorandum issued on June 9, meanwhile, voices alarm at the growth of opium production and addiction in Iran.

The memorandum stresses that Iran could become a transit area for illegal drugs moving from South Asia toward Western Europe and the United States. Some 170 tons of illicit Afghan and Pakistani opium are currently smuggled into Iran every year. According to the report, an Iranian prince who accompanied

Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi was recently charged by the Swiss authorities with carrying opium to Geneva.

After a 14-year ban on opium output, the Shah legalized the production of drug in 1969, partly in order to stop a drain on the country's foreign currency reserves through smuggling. His decision was denounced by the United Nations at the time as "tragic" for both Iran and other nations.

Since then, says the CIA memorandum, Iran has registered about 90,000 narcotics addicts. But this represents only one-fourth of the estimated 400,000 drug users in the country.

This year, the memorandum calculates, the demand for opium in Iran will total about 350 tons—roughly two-thirds of which will come from domestic production and the rest from contraband supplies.

The CIA document estimates, however, that Iranian opium production should soon satisfy and even exceed internal needs. At that point, the memorandum warns, the country could become a narcotics exporter and also a drug transit channel.